

MINUTES
MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
March 10, 2026

54404 The Board of Directors of The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California met on Tuesday, March 10, 2026.

Chair Ortega called the teleconference meeting to order at 2:05 p.m.

54405 The Meeting was opened with an invocation by Chair of the Board Adán Ortega, Jr., City of San Fernando.

54406 The Pledge of Allegiance was given by Board Vice Chair Barry Pressman, City of Beverly Hills.

54407 Board Secretary Fong-Sakai administered the roll call. Those responding present were: Directors Ackerman, Alvarez, Bryant, Camacho, Cordero, Crane, De Jesus (teleconference posted location available for the public), Denham, Dennstedt, Douglas, Erdman, Faessel, Fellow, Fong-Sakai, Garza, Gold (teleconference posted location available for the public), Jay, Kassakhian, Katz, Kurtz, Lewitt, McCoy, McMillan, Miller, Ortega, Paule, Phan (teleconference posted location available for the public), Pressman, Quinn, Ramos, Shepherd Romey, and Sutley.

Those not responding were: Directors Crawford, Gray, and Jung.

Board Secretary Fong-Sakai declared a quorum present.

Director(s) entered after roll call: Petersen and Seckel.

54408 Chair Ortega invited members of the public to address the Board on matters within the Board's jurisdiction

Two Public Hearings were held concurrently:

Public Hearing regarding the proposed water rates and charges for calendar years 2027 and 2028 necessary to meet the revenue requirements for fiscal years 2026/27 and 2027/28.

Public Hearing to receive staff and recognized employee organizations presentations on the status of job vacancies and recruitment and retention efforts, as required by Government Code Section 3502.3 (Assembly Bill 2561), to receive public comments. (in-person and via teleconference).

The public hearings were opened.

Director Petersen entered the meeting.

Chief Financial Officer Kasaine announced there is no presentation on the proposed water rates and charges.

Chair Ortega asked if there were any questions on the Hearing. None were made.

Brandon Patrick, Unit Manager, presented the status of job vacancies for Metropolitan

Alan Shanahan, President, and Amparo Munoz, Senior Engineering Technician, AFSCME Local 1902, presented on behalf of the Union regarding the job vacancies.

	Name	Affiliation	Comment
1.	Kelly Gardner	Main San Gabriel Basin Watermaster	Pure water
2.	Darcy Burke	Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District	Pure water and Items 4A and 4B
3.	Matthew Beeston	Representative for the Carpenters Union	Sites Reservoir
4.	Ryan (No Last Name Provided)	Partner, Southern California Longterm Security	AB 2647
5.	John Mendoza	Pomona Resident	Items 8-1 & 4b
6.	Charles (No Last Name Provided)	Former Director Santa Barbarita Water District and ratepayer	Item 4a
7.	Maura Monagan	LA Waterkeeper	Item 4a

The public hearings were closed.

Chair Ortega addressed the following: Other Matters and Reports.

54409 General Manager Deshmukh, in addition to his written report, introduced Calvin Farr, Prince William Water's General Manager and Chair of the U.S. Water Alliance. Mr. Farr is visiting Metropolitan while attending the Water Reuse Conference. Mr. Farr provided remarks regarding the U.S. Water Alliance. Updated on former General Manager Upadhyay receiving the 2026 Water Reuse Award for Excellence in Advocacy Achievement award.

54410 Chair Ortega asked if there were any corrections to the report of events attended by Directors at Metropolitan's expense during the month of February, as previously posted and distributed to the Board. None were made.

54411 Chair Ortega referred to the Chair's monthly report, which was previously posted and distributed to the Board. In addition, recognized Assistant General Counsel Torres' retirement after thirty-two years of service. February has several water-related awareness efforts: National Groundwater Awareness Week, Fix a Leak Week, World Water Day, Metropolitan Shutdown season begins, and acknowledged Persian Heritage Month, Cesar Chavez Day, and Women's History Month.

54412 General Counsel Scully, in addition to her written report, announced Assistant General Counsel Torres' retirement celebration following the board meeting and provide remarks acknowledging Women's History Month.

54413 Ethics Officer Salinas, in addition to his written report, Form 700 is due April 1, 2026.

54414 General Auditor Suzuki stated he has nothing to add to his written report.

54415 Presentation of 5-Year Service Pin to Director Dennis Erdman, Municipal Water District of Orange County. Director Erdman made remarks.

Director Phan left the meeting.

54416 Presentation of 5-Year Service Pin to Chair Adán Ortega, City of San Fernando. Chair Ortega made remarks.

Chair Ortega called on General Manager Deshmukh, who announced that March 2, 2026, is the deadline for the draft EIS at the national level to receive comments for the Colorado River Operating guidelines, and that San Diego County Water Authority approved the Memorandum of Understanding that supports the concept of interstate transfers of some of their water supplies.

54417 Approve minutes of the Special Joint meeting of the Executive Committee and Board of Directors for November 18, 2025, and December 9, 2025, and Board of Directors of January 13, 2026 (Agenda Item 6A). No comments or questions.

54418 Approve and appoint Committee Assignments. Appointing Director Kurtz as a member of the Audit Committee, Director Lewitt as a member of the Ad Hoc Committee on Colorado River Negotiations, Director Seckel as Chair Director Cordero as Vice Chair, Directors Douglas, Katz, Lewitt, McCoy, Paule, Ramos, and Sheperd Romey as members on the Ethics Committee (Agenda Item 6B).

54419 Approve amendments to the Metropolitan Water District Administrative Code to modify the structure and duties of existing committees to accommodate a new committee, and make other minor non-substantive changes (Item 7-2).

54420 Authorize an increase in the maximum amount payable under contract with Van Ness Feldman, LLP, for legal advice on Colorado River matters by \$250,000 to an amount not to exceed \$500,000 (Item 7-3).

Chair Ortega announced we will consider the consent calendar items 6A, 6B, 7-2 through 7-3, Item 7-1 was deferred at Committee.

Director Erdman moved, seconded by Director Camacho, that the Board approve the Consent Calendar Items 6A, 6B, 7-2 through 7-3.

Chair Ortega called for a vote to approve the Consent Calendar Items 6A, 6B, 7-2 through 7-3.

The following is a record of the vote:

Record of Vote on Consent Item(s): 6A, 6B, 7-2, and 7-3									
Member Agency	Total Votes	Director	Present	Yes	Yes Vote	No	No Vote	Abstain	Abstain Vote
Anaheim	6706	Faessel	x	x	6706				
Beverly Hills	4853	Pressman	x	x	4853				
Burbank	3416	Ramos	x	x	3416				
Calleguas Municipal Water District	14206	McMillan	x	x	14206				
Central Basin Municipal Water District	21215	Garza	x	x	21215				
		Crawford							
			Subtotal:		21215				
Compton	718	McCoy	x	x	718				
Eastern Municipal Water District	14725	Paule	x	x	14725				
Foothill Municipal Water District	2444	Bryant	x	x	2444				
Fullerton	2840	Jung							
Glendale	4326	Kassakhian	x	x	4326				
Inland Empire Utilities Agency	18220	Camacho	x	x	18220				
Las Virgenes	3346	Lewitt	x	x	3346				
Long Beach	7105	Cordero	x	x	7105				
Los Angeles	86834	Sutley	x	x	21709				
		Petersen	x	x	21709				
		Quinn	x	x	21709				
		Vacant							
		Douglas	x	x	21709				
			Subtotal:		86834				
Municipal Water Dist. of Orange County	71574	Ackerman	x	x	17894				
		Seckel	x	x	17894				
		Crane	x	x	17894				
		Erdman	x	x	17894				
			Subtotal:		71574				
Pasadena	4190	Kurtz	x	x	4190				
San Diego County Water Authority	73565	Fong-Sakai	x	x	18391				
		Denham	x	x	18391				
		Miller	x	x	18391				
		Katz	x	x	18391				
			Subtotal:		73565				
San Fernando	288	Ortega	x	x	288				
San Marino	878	Shepherd Romey	x	x	878				
Santa Ana	3732	Phan							
Santa Monica	5256	Gold	x	x	5256				
Three Valleys Municipal Water District	9536	De Jesus	x	x	9536				
Torrance	3949	Jay	x	x	3949				
Upper San Gabriel Valley Mun. Wat. Dist.	14772	Fellow	x	x	14772				
West Basin Municipal Water District	29790	Alvarez	x	x	29790				
		Gray							
			Subtotal:		29790				
Western Municipal Water District	16502	Dennstedt	x	x	16502				
Total	424986				418414				
Present and not voting									
Absent	6572								

The motion to approve the Consent Calendar Items 6A, 6B, 7-2 through 7-3 (M.I. No. 54417 through 54420) passed by a vote of 418,414 ayes; 0 noes; 0 abstain; 0 not voting; and 6,572 absent.

Chair Ortega called on Directors to state any recusals, abstentions, and disclosures on Board Items 8-2 through 8-4.

Chair Ortega stated Board Item 8-1 was tabled at the Committee meeting.

54421 Approve option 1 as presented in the confidential board letter (Board Item 8-2).

54422 Authorize an increase in the maximum amount payable under contract for legal services with BDG Law Group, APLC, in the amount of \$400,000 for a total amount not to exceed \$900,000 (Board Item 8-3).

54423 Authorize increase in the maximum amount payable under a contract for legal services in *Katano Kasaine v. Metropolitan Water District of Southern California; Adel Hagekhalil, an individual*; with Davis Wright Tremaine LLP in the amount of \$500,000 for a total amount not to exceed \$750,000 (Board Item 8-4).

Chair Ortega asked if any Directors want to discuss and/or vote separately on Board Action Item 8-2. None were made.

Chair Ortega asked if any Directors want to discuss Board Action Items 8-3 or 8-4 in closed session. None were made.

Chair Ortega asked if any Directors object to voting on the Board Action Items 8-3 and 8-4 together. None were made.

Director Kassakhian moved, seconded by Director Ramos, that the Board approve Board Items 8-2, 8-3 and 8-4.

Chair Ortega called for a vote to approve Board Items 8-2 through 8-4.

The following is a record of the vote:

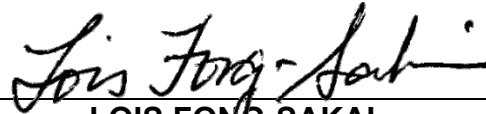
Record of Vote on Item:		8-2, 8-3 & 8-4							
Member Agency	Total Votes	Director	Present	Yes	Yes Vote	No	No Vote	Abstain	Abstain Vote
Anaheim	6706	Faessel	x	x	6706				
Beverly Hills	4853	Pressman	x	x	4853				
Burbank	3416	Ramos	x	x	3416				
Calleguas Municipal Water District	14206	McMillan	x	x	14206				
Central Basin Municipal Water District	21215	Garza	x	x	21215				
		Crawford							
			Subtotal:		21215				
Compton	718	McCoy	x	x	718				
Eastern Municipal Water District	14725	Paule	x	x	14725				
Foothill Municipal Water District	2444	Bryant	x	x	2444				
Fullerton	2840	Jung							
Glendale	4326	Kassakhian	x	x	4326				
Inland Empire Utilities Agency	18220	Camacho	x	x	18220				
Las Virgenes	3346	Lewitt	x	x	3346				
Long Beach	7105	Cordero	x	x	7105				
Los Angeles	86834	Sutley	x	x	21709				
		Petersen	x	x	21709				
		Quinn	x	x	21709				
		Vacant							
		Douglas	x	x	21709				
			Subtotal:		86834				
Municipal Water Dist. of Orange County	71574	Ackerman	x	x	17894				
		Seckel	x	x	17894				
		Crane	x	x	17894				
		Erdman	x	x	17894				
			Subtotal:		71574				
Pasadena	4190	Kurtz	x	x	4190				
San Diego County Water Authority	73565	Fong-Sakai	x	x	18391				
		Denham	x	x	18391				
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San Fernando	288	Ortega	x	x	288				
San Marino	878	Shepherd Romey	x	x	878				
Santa Ana	3732	Phan							
Santa Monica	5256	Gold	x	x	5256				
Three Valleys Municipal Water District	9536	De Jesus	x	x	9536				
Torrance	3949	Jay	x	x	3949				
Upper San Gabriel Valley Mun. Wat. Dist.	14772	Fellow	x	x	14772				
West Basin Municipal Water District	29790	Alvarez	x	x	29790				
		Gray							
			Subtotal:		29790				
Western Municipal Water District	16502	Dennstedt	x	x	16502				
Total	424986				418414				
Present and not voting									
Absent	6572								

The motion to approve the Board Items 8-2 through 8-4 (M.I. No. 54421 through 54423) passed by a vote of 418,414 ayes; 0 noes; 0 abstain; 0 not voting; and 6,572 absent.

Chair Ortega if there was any discussion on Item 9-1 through 9-5. No requests were made.

54424 Chair Ortega asked if there were any Follow-Up Items. No requests were made.

54425 There being no objection, the meeting was adjourned at 3:51 p.m.



**LOIS FONG-SAKAI
BOARD SECRETARY**



**ADÁN ORTEGA JR.
CHAIR OF THE BOARD**